



The Cross on the Side of the Road

By Kathleen Tobin

Years ago, I heard a story of a lady who died and had an after-death experience. When she came back to life, she had said that if it weren't for the prayers of a man who read about her car accident in a newspaper, she would have died and gone to hell. Since God exists out of time, that man's prayers helped to save that woman's soul and God gave her another chance at life. I'm not sure where I heard that story but it stuck with me to this day. Now, whenever I see an accident, hear sirens, or see a cross on the side of the road, I say a prayer for that person.

For a few years, I used to commute from Pennsylvania to New Jersey for work and I would always pass a big white cross on the hill near the on-ramp for route 95. Each time I passed that cross, I would say a prayer for whoever died there. One Easter, my husband and I were on that same on-ramp headed to my mother's house in NJ.

As we turned the bend onto Rt. 95, there was a middle-aged man standing next to his car, which was pulled over on the shoulder of the road. Usually, I am not inclined to stop for numerous reasons, including prudence, but I pray for the people and for someone to stop who can actually assist them (I just recently learned how to change a tire over our vacation but prior to that only knew how to dial for road assistance). As we neared the man's car, my heart sank and I thought, "Oh, we should have stopped to help that man." Just then, my husband pulled over behind his car and stepped out to talk to him. I waited in the car wondering what they were talking about since he didn't seem to have an issue with his car.

When my husband got back in the car, he said the man's name was Gus. He had stopped to place some flowers by the cross up on the hill, which marked where his only son, Sean, had died in a car accident.

I couldn't believe it! What are the odds of actually meeting the father of that person and learning his name? My husband was shocked when I told him that every time, I passed that cross, I prayed for the person who had died there. Both of us were moved by God's tenderness in having us meet Gus. Now, when I pass by, I pray for him and his son, Sean, by name.

God was showing me that He *does* hear my prayers and that *all* prayers matter, even ones for strangers! So, when you wonder if God hears *your* prayers, just know that He does and keep your eyes open for unexpected surprises!



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